

The British Connection: The Secret Son of Brig. Gen. Daniel Harris Reynolds

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DANIEL HARRIS REYNOLDS IS WELL KNOWN to historians of Arkansas for his distinguished service in the Confederate Army and for the lively and illuminating diary that he kept throughout the Civil War.¹ Born near Centerburg in Hilliar Township, Knox County, Ohio, on December 14, 1832, he was the fourth of the ten children of Amos Reynolds (1801-1850) and

¹A typescript transcription of the diary is item no. 131 in the Daniel Harris Reynolds Papers [hereinafter DHR Papers], MS R32, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. It has been published, edited by Robert Patrick Bender, as *Worthy of the Cause for Which They Fight: The Civil War Diary of Brigadier General Daniel Harris Reynolds, 1861-1865* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2011). The DHR Papers were given to the University of Arkansas by Martha Hill Williams (1893-1960), the elder daughter of Reynolds's eldest acknowledged child, Kate Reynolds Hill (1869-1943). It is a reasonable assumption that Kate inherited the original of the diary after her mother's death in 1924, that Martha inherited it from Kate in 1943, and that the transcript, described in the catalog of the papers as a "carbon copy of a typewritten copy," was made or commissioned by a member of that branch of the family, very likely by Martha herself. In the absence of the original manuscript, one cannot be sure that the typescript version is complete and wholly accurate.

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Sophia Houck (1808-1849), farmers.² After the deaths of his parents, he studied at the recently founded Ohio Wesleyan University from 1850 to 1854 and became a freemason in 1853. From Delaware, Ohio, he moved to Iowa in 1854, then to Somerville, Tennessee, three years later to study law. After qualifying as an attorney at law, he established his own practice in Lake Village, Chicot County, Arkansas, taking up residence there on June 15, 1858.³ The settlement, which was to be his home for the rest of his life, was small but had gained significance in 1857, when it became the county seat. The main attraction of the area for new settlers was the prosperity created by its cotton plantations. The population increased from 5115 in 1850 to 9234 in 1860, when the county produced more cotton than any other in Arkansas. Of the 1860 population, 7512 were slaves.⁴

Reynolds prospered professionally and began to invest in property—but he did not buy slaves. The 1860 census shows him resident on June 1 in Parker House (Hotel) in Old River Township, along with four other lawyers and a dozen or so others of various trades and professions. His real estate was valued at \$8500, his personal estate at \$500.⁵

At the same time, he was becoming prominent on the local political front as a vigorous proponent of the secession of the southern states. The only surviving antebellum issue of the *Chicot Press*, dated January 17, 1861, includes his announcement of his candidacy for election as delegate to the proposed secession convention in Little Rock and of arrangements for him to address meetings at nine locations in Chicot County before the balloting on January 28. The same issue contains appeals for support of the Chicot Rangers, a body of cavalry that he recruited, which was to become Company A of the First Arkansas Mounted Rifles in the Confederate Army.⁶

Reynolds was not elected delegate to the secession convention, but during the war he gained great prestige, showing much political astuteness as well as fine military judgment and leadership. After the battle of Pea Ridge in March 1862, his unit fought in the Western Theater as part of the

²On Reynolds's parents, ancestors, and siblings, see his manuscript notes, written on September 1, 1867, from memoranda made in 1856-1858: "The genealogy of myself as taken from records and obtained from old relatives," DHR Papers, item no. 116.

³The exact date is given in his diary under June 15, 1865, the date of his return to Lake Village after the war, which was seven years to the day after he arrived as a settler; Bender, *Worthy of the Cause*, 186.

⁴Scott Cashion, "Chicot County," *Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*, www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net (accessed July 12, 2016).

⁵Manuscript census returns, Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, population schedules, Chicot County, AR. Two years later, his property was valued at \$7650 by Judge Henry Hayes in a letter to Reynolds of February 8, 1862; DHR Papers, item no. 7.

⁶*Chicot Press* (Lake Village), January 17, 1861.



Daniel Harris Reynolds, c. 1864, aged about thirty-two. From Bobby Roberts and Carl Moneyhon, *Portraits of Conflict: A Photographic History of Arkansas in the Civil War* (1987).

Army of Tennessee. Starting as a captain, he achieved the rank of colonel in November 1863 and brigadier general in March 1864. His active service ceased on March 19, 1865, shortly before the end of the war, when, during the battle of Bentonville, North Carolina, a cannonball killed the horse on which he was mounted and destroyed his left leg, which had to be amputated above the knee. He endured the whole ordeal with great sto-

icism. On June 2, he ordered a wooden leg from a doctor in Baltimore. On June 15, he was back home and wrote the final words in his diary:

The war is over and we failed. I have many things to regret and many things to be proud of, but of none am I prouder than that of having commanded "Reynolds's Arkansas Brigade" and nothing do I regret so much as the loss of our cause. We lost many noble men, but those who did their duty like men will ever be held in grateful remembrance by their relatives and friends, and by the friends of constitutional liberty everywhere. Peace to their ashes.⁷

On August 21, 1865, Reynolds wrote to President Andrew Johnson, making a special application for the benefits of the amnesty proclamation of May 28, 1865—an amnesty from which he, as a senior Confederate officer, was excluded. Having received no reply, he wrote again on January 15, 1866.⁸ Again, no reply was received, and it was not until November 13, 1866 that he was granted a full presidential pardon.⁹ In August 1866, the citizens of Chicot, Ashley, and Drew Counties elected him to the Arkansas state senate, but he only served for a matter of months before the legislature was disbanded by Reconstruction authorities. After that, he concentrated on his work as a lawyer, his political prospects dimmed by the enfranchisement of Chicot County's black majority. Reynolds did run for a seat in the state's constitutional convention in 1874, but lost. He continued to invest in land, and, at one stage, owned about 60,000 acres in Chicot County.¹⁰

A bachelor until after the Civil War, Reynolds married a woman whom he is said to have met and courted "shortly after his return to Lake Village."¹¹ Martha ("Mattie") Jane Wallace was born in Holmes County, Mississippi, on May 23, 1845, the only child of Jeremiah Wallace (1822-1848), a Scottish immigrant, and Eleanor Wallace *née* Waddell (1826-1916). She was only three years old when her father died. She and her mother, surnamed Avent by 1868, are said to have moved to Lake Village in 1859.¹² They remained there throughout the war. Reynolds and Mat-

⁷Bender, *Worthy of the Cause*, 186-187.

⁸DHR Papers, item nos. 108-109.

⁹Bender, *Worthy of the Cause*, 6.

¹⁰Mrs. J. W. McMurray, "Sketch of Mrs. D. H. Reynolds, of Lake Village," in *Confederate Women of Arkansas in the Civil War: Memorial Reminiscences, Originally Published in 1907 by the United Confederate Veterans of Arkansas, Revised, and New Material Added with an Introduction by Michael B. Dougan* (Fayetteville: M & M Press, 1993), 133; *Arkansas Gazette* (Little Rock), June 30, 1874, p. 4.

¹¹Bender, *Worthy of the Cause*, 6. See, also, McMurray, "Sketch," 132.

¹²However, they are not shown as being there in the census of July 1860.

tie were married in a Presbyterian ceremony in Lake Village on November 24, 1868.¹³ He was thirty-five, she twenty-three. The couple were to have five children—three daughters and two sons, born between 1869 and 1883. He died in Lake Village on March 14, 1902, aged sixty-nine, and is buried in Lake Village Cemetery. She survived him by twenty-two years, dying on March 23, 1924. Her grave, too, is in Lake Village Cemetery.

The marriage has been called “a lovely uniting of two fine characters.”¹⁴ No doubt it was, but Reynolds’s private life after he returned from the war was less regular than has been hitherto represented. Apparently unknown to all those who have written about him, he had an affair with a widowed British woman prior to his marriage and fathered an illegitimate son by her.

The British woman was Anne (“Annie”) Franklin. The daughter of John Williams, a millwright (a highly skilled profession, like that of a mechanical engineer), and Winifred Williams *née* Wynne, she was born in Liverpool on April 11, 1829. She had at least three brothers and two sisters. On July 28, 1853, when residing in Dexter Street, Toxteth Park, Liverpool, she married William Inch Franklin. She was twenty-four, four years younger than William, who is described on the marriage certificate as a “merchant.”¹⁵

Soon after their marriage the couple went to Chicot County, where William had already been living. The census of 1850 shows that on September 27, he was a resident of Oden Township.¹⁶ His profession is not given, so one cannot tell if he was already a merchant. After he returned to Chicot County with Annie, they had two daughters—(Mary) Elizabeth (“Bessie”) Franklin, born on May 14, 1854, and Ruth Franklin, born on April 3, 1856.¹⁷ In his will, dated August 11, 1858, William declared that he was “of the town of Columbia, in the County of Chicot.”¹⁸ At that time, when there was no railway into southern Arkansas, Columbia, on the west bank of the Mississippi River, was a prosperous settlement, especially

¹³The marriage license is recorded in Chicot County Minister’s Credentials and Marriage License Book C, 46, Chicot County Courthouse, Lake Village.

¹⁴McMurray, “Sketch,” 132.

¹⁵In this article, certificates of births, deaths, and marriages in England and Wales are often used as sources of information, as are wills and probate records and census returns. Copies of certificates for events since 1837 can be ordered online from the General Register Office, www.gro.gov.uk. Probate documents and wills for those who died in or after 1858 can be found and ordered online from the website GOV.UK. Census returns from 1841 to 1911 are available online from ancestry.co.uk (1841-1891) and findmypast.co.uk (1901, 1911).

¹⁶Manuscript census returns, Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, population schedules, Chicot County, AR.

¹⁷No Chicot County birth or death records from this time survive. The birth dates come from a descendant of Annie.

¹⁸Chicot County Will Record Book C, 153-154, Chicot County Courthouse.



Annie Reynolds, *née* Williams, probably soon after her marriage to William Franklin in 1853. *Private collection.*

important for the shipping of cotton grown on local plantations. In the years before the Civil War, the export of cotton, picked by slaves, from the southern states to England was at its peak, and most of it was landed in Liverpool. William's will does not specify the nature of the business he carried on in Columbia, but his mention of "goods [and] fixtures" suggests that he was still a merchant, and this is amply confirmed by entries

in Deed Books H and J in the archives of the Chicot County Courthouse. They reveal that, from 1855 on, William, sometimes jointly with Annie, was involved in several real estate transactions. He acquired town lots and owned stores in both Columbia and Lake Village. The most noteworthy document is a debenture, dated April 14, 1859, between him and Reynolds. It reveals that he was in debt to the tune of over \$18,700, owed to a string of businesses and individuals. In several cases, court action to recover the money had already been taken. William wished to pay off all his debts as soon as possible and, in return for a nominal payment of one dollar, he assigned specified lots of land and his two stocks of goods to Reynolds in trust to sell on the most advantageous terms and to use the proceeds to pay off his creditors in a designated order of preference. Reynolds was "to receive as compensation for his services a reasonable percent on the amount of assets by him collected and paid to the beneficiaries."¹⁹

As well as being a businessman, William was a public servant. Despite his unsuccessful management of his own finances, he held the post of Chicot County treasurer from 1858 to 1860.²⁰

In the 1860 census, taken on July 18, William's occupation is not stated, perhaps because he was no longer working. His business had collapsed, and it may be indicative of a serious illness that a physician, William H. Makie from Kentucky, is shown as residing in the same house as the Franklins. In view of William's recent financial problems, one need not be surprised that the value of his real estate is estimated at only \$200, his personal estate at \$500.²¹

William died on November 22, 1860. In his will, he had expressed full confidence in his "beloved wife Annie" to do what was best for the disposal of his estate so far as their children were concerned and stated that he did not wish "to embarrass her in any manner in case she may wish to remove from Arkansas." By 1864, Annie was living in Lake Village, and she may well have moved there early in the war, if not before it, for the sake of security. There is no way of knowing whether she considered going back to England after William died, and, if so, why she decided not

¹⁹Chicot County Deed Book J, 48-51, Chicot County Courthouse, Lake Village.

²⁰His name appears in published lists of county officers as W. F. Franklin, but he is the only male Franklin over the age of five in the Chicot County census lists for 1850 and 1860, and the treasurer's correct initials, W. I., are given several times in Chicot County Record Book E, 250, Chicot County Courthouse. I warmly thank local history expert Blake Wintory for searching the Chicot County Courthouse archives on my behalf and for locating and copying not only the mentions of W. I. Franklin as treasurer but also the pages of the deed books that record William Franklin's property agreements, including his agreement with Reynolds.

²¹Manuscript census returns, Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, population schedules, Chicot County, AR.

to, but her decision very likely implies that she liked the life in Chicot County and already had a feeling of belonging there. Her daughters had known no other home, and the family would have made friends, some of whom could have been expected to be supportive of them. Moreover, although in hindsight a move away from Arkansas might seem to have been wise, she could not have predicted the course, duration, and outcome of the war. It is possible that she discussed her options with William's executors, Johnson Chapman (1815-1868) and Anthony Harpin Davies (1798-1862). Both were wealthy men of long experience and great influence in Chicot County. Chapman was a plantation owner and also a lawyer. Davies owned the Lake Hall plantation on Lake Chicot and had served two terms as county judge.²² In view of the professional assistance that Reynolds gave when William was in financial difficulty, he is another person whom Annie may have consulted.

The witnesses of William's will, Daniel H. Sessions and John MacLean, were also prominent figures in Chicot County. MacLean, born in Scotland, lived at Bayou Macon, to the west of Lake Village, and served in the Chicot Rangers until May 1, 1862, first as a private, then, from September 24, 1861, as a second lieutenant. Three letters from him to Reynolds survive, reporting on the situation in Chicot County during the war and indicating a firm friendship between the two.²³

Another prominent Chicot man who corresponded with Reynolds during the war mentioned Annie three times in two letters and gives us some picture of how difficult life was for her. He also provides the valuable information that Annie and Reynolds wrote to one another, at least in 1864. The writer signed himself "H.H." or "H." Both from the content of the letters and from the handwriting, he can be identified with certainty as Henry Hayes (born c. 1830), Chicot County judge from 1860 to 1866.²⁴

The letters, both sent from Lake Village, are dated July 24 and October 9, 1864. In the earlier letter, Hayes wrote: "I have partially recovered my equanimity after the severe trials, afflictions and losses inflicted by

²²Ibid., population schedules, slave schedules; Blake Wintory, *Chicot County (Images of America)* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2015), 14.

²³Bender, *Worthy of the Cause*, 29, 212-213; John MacLean to Reynolds, March 10, 1864, October 16, 1864, February 24, 1865, DHR Papers, item nos. 39, 93, 101.

²⁴The handwriting is identical to that in Hayes to Reynolds, February 8, 1862. That letter is concerned mainly with taxation matters but also announces a forthcoming "grand exhibition and entertainment given by the Ladies of Chicot at the Court House for the benefit of sick soldiers at the Nashville Hospital." The program was to include: "Tableaux/Music, By Worthingtons Band/Ditto a number of times—/Supper— Embracing all the delicacies of the season including oysters etc./ Music—/Field cleared—Guns unlimbered/Drinks/Dancing, all night till broad day light etc." Chicot County had not yet suffered the full effects of the war. For Hayes's dates as judge (given incorrectly in some lists), see Chicot County Record Books E and F, Chicot County Courthouse.

the d—d thieving, lousy, cowardly, servile yankees. They find they can't conquer our soldiers, so they vent their spleen and indulge their avarice in pillaging and robbing unarmed citizens, women and children, whenever they get the opportunity."²⁵

These actions followed the battle at Ditch Bayou on June 6, 1864. A Confederate force of cavalry and artillery under the command of Brig. Gen. John Sappington Marmaduke had arrived in Chicot County around mid-May and effectively blockaded the Mississippi River by bombarding passing gunboats and transports. A Union force of 6000 men aboard twenty-eight steam vessels was sent to deal with the situation. Half the force landed on June 5 and the following day attacked six hundred Confederate troops, who, although outnumbered five-to-one, inflicted much higher casualties on the enemy than they suffered themselves.²⁶ The Federal troops moved on to Lake Village and gave its inhabitants a rough time, as Hayes described: "The yankees camped here over night robbing all hen roosts, kitchens, pantries, meat houses, and in some instances every thing else, womens and childrens clothing etc, and tearing down much of the fencing, destroying gardens etc. Mrs Franklin fortunately escaped with the loss of her provisions, kitchen wares and a few small articles."

Annie may have come off lightly compared with some other residents, but the experience must have been a terrifying one, and, indeed, there would have been many scary times during the war as the opposing sides fought and skirmished in the locality. Obviously, it was worse when Federal soldiers or lawless bandits were on the scene, but the presence of Confederate forces could also be a cause of concern, partly because they needed to live off the land, partly because their presence was all too likely to provoke enemy attention and retaliation, as happened in summer 1864.²⁷ Hayes complained to Reynolds that Marmaduke "did much more harm than good." "[H]e has some of the qualities of a good general," Hayes conceded, but he criticized Marmaduke's planning and alleged that he squandered "one of the finest opportunities here, of gaining a most brilliant victory." Hayes gave a lively and entertaining account of Marmaduke's conduct and reception after his arrival in Lake Village in May 1864:

He made his Head Quarters in the woods back of the jail. He spent most of his time at Mrs Franklins—he complaining of being

²⁵H. H. to Reynolds, July 24, 1864, DHR Papers, item no. 65.

²⁶For a detailed account of the battle, see William L. Shea, "Battle at Ditch Bayou," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 39 (Autumn 1980): 195-207.

²⁷On the war in Chicot County, see Daniel Doyle, "The Civil War in the Greenville Bends," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 70 (Summer 2011): 131-161.

indisposed—where he was beset and placed *hors de combat* by the adulations and caresses of a number of old and young female parasites. It was amusing and disgusting to witness the two widows from over the Lake, one holding to each of his coat tails (figuratively) in the most beloved manner, seemingly first experiencing the maidenly sensations of the thrilling passion, while the younger dames were exhibiting not the spread-eagle, but spread skirts in front, apparently vieing [*sic*] with each other as to who should be the fortunate one to get on his *staff*.²⁸

What c[ou]ld have produced amongst the fair se[x s]uch a sensation in favor of Marmaduke I cannot divine, unless it is that he was the first *line*-general that they have had amongst them, and had that *nonchalant* air, and a good deal of small talk which they seem to relish.²⁹

There is no suggestion that Annie was star-struck or man-hungry in the way the other women were, but it is interesting that she is the one who acted as Marmaduke's hostess.

In the second letter, written eleven weeks later (October 9), Hayes replied to a letter of September 6 from Reynolds and updated him on the situation at home. He himself had been without light or fuel since Union soldiers stole or destroyed everything except his books. But he seemed less sorry for himself than for another resident:

Mrs Franklin is well, but at times quite low spirited. I sympathize with her deeply, she is so far from her relations, and it is difficult for any one here who has no family connexions to produce the means of subsistence. The planters here have forgotten the many favors and kindnesses they received from her and her husband in his lifetime. I hope they and she will yet receive their reward. She rec^d your last letter, and wrote you a long letter in July which I suppose you had not rec^d. Bessie is well and growing like a weed. She will soon be a young lady.³⁰

The information that Reynolds and Annie were corresponding with each other at this stage is telling.³¹ He had not been home since January 1863, so one can reasonably assume that friendly contacts between the two went

²⁸An obvious *double entendre*, emphasized by Hayes's underlining of the word.

²⁹The square-bracketed letters in this sentence are missing from the manuscript.

³⁰H. H. to Reynolds, October 9, 1864, DHR Papers, item no. 92.

³¹Unsurprisingly, there are no letters from Annie among the DHR Papers. He is likely to have destroyed them. The possibility that letters he wrote to her survive is mentioned below.



Annie Reynolds, probably c. 1895, in her mid-sixties.
Private collection.

back at least as far as that and very likely began when her husband was still alive, in view of the help that Reynolds gave him in April 1859. In any case, the affair Annie and Reynolds had in 1866 did not come from nowhere but arose out of several years of friendly acquaintance and communication.

At what stage the relationship between Annie and Reynolds became sexual one cannot know. But it is certain that the two had sexual intercourse in spring 1866, probably in late April or early May. One can imagine that Annie, who had been widowed for several years and was likely to have desired a man for her and her family's security as well as to satisfy her physical and emotional needs, would have considered Reynolds a prize catch, despite the loss of his left leg. He was handsome, courageous, clever, influential, and comfortably off. Photographs of Annie as a young woman, and indeed one of her when she was probably in her mid-sixties,

show that she was good-looking, and the indications are that she was not only kind and friendly but also determined and brave. Clearly, Reynolds found her attractive, but in 1866 she was thirty-seven to his thirty-four, and perhaps her age may have seemed a disadvantage to him. Certainly the woman he chose to marry was much younger and without children. She is also more likely than Annie to have had some money. There survives a receipt, dated June 30, 1864, issued to Martha J. Wallace for the purchase of \$500 of Confederate registered bonds.³²

Annie probably knew or suspected that she was pregnant by the end of June 1866. After presumably discussing with Reynolds what to do, she arranged to leave Chicot County and go back to England, from which she had been absent for thirteen years, and have the baby there. Family tradition, as reported by one of her descendants, is that there was an agreement that he would join her in England. According to the same descendant, there may be letters in the family from Reynolds to Annie, but this informant has not read them and does not at present have access to them. Given the huge commitment Reynolds had shown to Arkansas and Chicot County during the Civil War, it might seem surprising if he was prepared to follow Annie to England and start a new life there. It is true that he had been on the losing side, but he had land in Chicot County and in August 1866 would be elected to the state senate. At the time Annie became pregnant, he was still awaiting a presidential pardon, but, after he obtained that in mid-November 1866, he would have been free to do what he wanted. Anyhow, for whatever reasons, he did not follow her to England.

Whether Annie realized the affair with Reynolds was over before she left Arkansas or only after she arrived in England, her unhappiness about the situation can be imagined. She probably left Chicot County in July or August 1866, before it became obvious that she was expecting a baby. Bessie would have gone with her. She is shown as living with her mother, unmarried and without occupation, in the English census records of 1881, 1891, and 1901.³³ There is no mention of Ruth in the English census records and no mention of her in Henry Hayes's letter of October 9, 1864. It seems certain that she died in childhood in Arkansas between 1860 and 1864.

Annie and Reynolds's son was born in Liverpool on February 4, 1867, and named Richard ("Dickie") Williams Reynolds. Williams was Annie's maiden name, and she almost certainly called her son Richard after one of her elder brothers, Richard Williams (1817-1909), who, when she got

³²DHR Papers, item no. 113.

³³Bessie was not at her mother's address on the day of the 1871 census. She may have been staying with relatives or friends or at a boarding school.

married, had given her away, their father being deceased. The baby's birth certificate gives the place of birth as 161 Admiral Street in the sub-district of Toxteth Park. It names his mother as "Anne Reynolds formerly Williams," his father as "Daniel Reynolds," and his father's occupation as "Attorney at Law." The informant is "Anne Reynolds Mother Lake Village Chicot County Arkansas America." The birth was registered on March 12, 1867, thirty-six days after the event, which makes one wonder if Annie delayed to allow time for an exchange of letters with the child's father.³⁴

The mother was to call herself Annie or Anne Reynolds for the rest of her life and from 1871 presented herself as a widow.³⁵ Although it is true that she was a widow, she was not the widow of Daniel Reynolds, not only because she was never married to him but also because until 1902 he was still alive. On her death certificate, she is explicitly described as "Widow of Daniel Reynolds ~~Barrister~~ Attorney at Law." Admittedly, that was after Reynolds's death, but the information, supplied by her son, is false. The younger Reynolds knew who his father was and, according to a descendant, knew that he had married Mattie Wallace in 1868, but it seems that he never revealed that his parents were not married to one another. This is not surprising for that day and age, but the question arises whether Annie ever told him before she died. Perhaps she did not.

It is noteworthy that Annie gave her residence on Richard's birth certificate as Lake Village rather than Liverpool. Likewise, when he was baptized into the Church of England at St. Paul's Church, Prince's Park, Toxteth, on April 17, 1867, the abode of his parents, "Daniel & Annie," was recorded in the baptismal register as "Arkansas U.S."³⁶ One wonders whether Annie was just intending to prevent awkward questions about the whereabouts of Richard's father or still hoped for a future with him.

Annie did not remain in Liverpool for long. By 1868, she moved to Birmingham, England.³⁷ Again, a wish to avoid possible questions about her marital status and her son's paternity may have been one reason for the move away from her home area. But a powerful positive reason for choosing Birmingham was that her brother Richard and his wife, Margaret ("Peggy") Williams *née* Arrowsmith (c. 1817-1902), lived in Wednesbury, a few miles northwest of the city. They had been in the town since

³⁴Not all of the information on the certificate is accurate. The birth could not have taken place at 161 Admiral Street, for, according to the Liverpool Record Office, no such number existed at that time. So, unless the registrar made a mistake, Annie seems to have supplied incorrect, and possibly deliberately misleading, information.

³⁵1871 census.

³⁶Reynolds's profession is given in the register as "Solicitor." The register is held by the Liverpool Record Office.

³⁷Her name appears in Birmingham directories (Kelly's, Hulley's, and White's) from 1869, and an 1869 directory will have been compiled in 1868. She is always shown as "Mrs."

1844, when Richard Williams began a fifty-year career with the Patent Shaft and Axletree Company there. He became a prominent member of the local community, serving as a justice of the peace and as Wednesbury's first mayor (1886-1888).³⁸ Annie found accommodation in Handsworth, on the same side of Birmingham as Wednesbury, but just two or three miles from the city center. She was to spend the rest of her life there, although not always at the same address.

Her occupation is shown in the 1871 census as "Rents from houses," as is that of her sister-in-law Peggy, who was staying with her. In the censuses of 1881, 1891, and 1901, she is shown as having no occupation but as having a resident female servant, so, although she was not very wealthy, she was not poor either. After she died in 1907, the gross value of her estate was £3674, the equivalent of about £338,000 in 2016. One would hope that Reynolds gave her financial assistance when and after she left Arkansas. Richard and Peggy may have helped too, and they would have been a valued source of support in other ways. For young Richard, without a father on the scene, his uncle is likely to have been a significant presence in childhood, and, given that his aunt and uncle were childless, he is likely to have been a welcome arrival in their lives.

The Williams family was educated, practical, industrious, and ambitious, with a strong sense of social responsibility, and Annie ensured that her son received the best local education available. Whatever school he first attended, probably in Handsworth, its teaching must have been good, for, on January 20, 1879, about a fortnight before his twelfth birthday, he was admitted, with a Foundation Scholarship, to King Edward's School (KES), Birmingham. Established by King Edward VI in 1552, this boys' school had high academic standards.

The younger Reynolds was at KES until July 1886. His record, chronicled in the school's class lists, was impressive.³⁹ Starting in the Ninth Class in January 1879, he was elevated to the Fifth Class in 1879-1880, the Third Class in 1880-1881, and the Second Class in 1881-1882. During these years, he won many prizes. In July 1881, he was awarded a Junior Scholarship and, in July 1883, a Senior Scholarship. The senior award was made at the end of his first year in the First Class (1882-1883), which he had entered at age fifteen, and in which he remained for four years. Membership of the First Class was restricted to just twelve pupils, and it was very unusual to join it at such a young age.⁴⁰ He continued to win prizes

³⁸"Richard Williams (1817-1909)," *Grace's Guide to British Industrial History*, www.graces-guide.co.uk/Main_Page (accessed June 11, 2017).

³⁹The class lists are in KES's archives.

⁴⁰Another who achieved the same feat, twenty-five years later, was J. R. R. Tolkien.

in a wide range of subjects. In his final year, he was School Captain (head boy). Throughout his time at KES, he excelled outside the classroom as well as in it, making notable contributions to the Debating Society, drama, and care of the library.

In 1885, during his last year at KES, he was awarded an Open Classical Exhibition, worth seventy pounds a year, at Balliol College, Oxford. He entered in October 1886, when he was nineteen. In the matriculation register of the University of Oxford, he is shown as the first son of “Daniel [Reynolds], of Liverpool, gent.”⁴¹ In 1888, he was placed in the second class of Classical Moderations (“Mods”), in 1890, in the first class of Literae Humaniores (“Greats”). The Master of Balliol throughout his time there was Benjamin Jowett, a notable educational reformer whose liberal influence transformed the college. In recruiting students, he was much more interested in their ability than in the names of the schools they had attended. It would be surprising if Jowett did not leave his mark on Reynolds. As at KES, Reynolds was a keen debater, and in his last year he was president of the debating society, the Brackenbury Society. It is also recorded that he rowed in the second Balliol boat for Torpids in Oxford’s bumping races.⁴²

From Oxford, Reynolds went to London in 1890 to train to become a barrister. His success in the debating societies of KES and Balliol augured well for this career. Whether he was influenced at all by the knowledge that his father was a lawyer, one does not know, but he was certainly aware of his father’s profession. He was a member of Inner Temple and successfully took the Pass Examination in December 1892. However, his legal career never took off, perhaps through a combination of bad luck and a distracting interest in other matters, especially politics, journalism, and literature. Despite this, he always took considerable pride in his legal qualification. Although he was a schoolmaster from 1900 to 1922, on his mother’s death certificate (1907), his first marriage certificate (1910), the birth certificates of his children (1912, 1913, 1915), his second marriage certificate (1935), and his will he gave his profession as “barrister at law.” Only in the 1911 census did he identify himself as “schoolmaster.”

As well as studying law, he spent some time translating Greek and Latin texts into English. His versions of Book 22 of Homer’s *Iliad*, Euripides’ tragedy *Alcestis*, and Books 1 and 2 of Horace’s *Odes* were published by Hodder and Stoughton in its Classical Translation Library series

⁴¹Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: The Members of the University of Oxford, 1715-1886: Their Parentage, Birthplace, and Year of Birth, with a Record of their Degrees*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Parker & Co., 1888), 1188.

⁴²Information from Balliol College archives.

in February 1893. In each case, the translation was presented in parallel with the Greek or Latin original.

From 1893 until 1901, Reynolds had rooms in the Inner Temple. Before that, he often lodged at 88 St. James's Street, sometimes, when the tenant was elsewhere, in the apartment of Oscar Browning, former Eton schoolmaster, fellow of King's College, Cambridge, educational reformer, historian, and eccentric. Reynolds may have been introduced to him by George Warrington Steevens, brilliant classicist at Balliol and friend of Browning, or OB, as he was always called. Letters from Reynolds to OB, written between 1892 and 1898, show that the latter took a friendly and helpful interest in the younger man's welfare and career.⁴³ OB was a homosexual and much enjoyed the company of young men, but, although in the summer of 1898 he invited Reynolds to be his traveling companion on a trip abroad, there is nothing to indicate any sort of sexual relationship between them.⁴⁴

Another occupant of no. 88 was the writer George Slythe Street, best known for *The Autobiography of a Boy* (1894), in which he brilliantly satirized the Aesthetic Movement in general and Oscar Wilde in particular. Like Street and Steevens, Reynolds was employed to write for the *National Observer*, a weekly journal edited until 1894 by the poet and critic William Ernest Henley, and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, an evening newspaper, edited from 1892 to 1896 by Henry ("Harry") Cust. It is likely that he, like Steevens, was hired on the recommendation of OB. Both publications attracted writers of real merit. Reynolds was never a signing contributor to either publication, so independent assessment of his journalistic work is not possible. According to his KES obituarist, "he wrote little but fastidiously," and this is true not only of his years in London but of his whole career.⁴⁵ For one who had ample leisure for much of his life and also abundant knowledge and ability, his literary output was small. Likely restricting factors included modesty, diffidence, a laudable but misguided perfectionism, and the generous assistance he gave to others with their work.

Modesty and diffidence are perhaps discernible in Reynolds's face in a photograph taken in 1906. His look is markedly different from the confident one of his father. Some physical likenesses between the two can be observed, in the eyes, eyebrows, nose, ears, and hair texture, but the consensus of opinion is that he looks at least as much like his mother as his father—not that any diffidence is discernible in her face.

⁴³Papers of Oscar Browning, King's College, Cambridge, Archive Centre, catalog no. OB/1/1357A.

⁴⁴Reynolds to OB, July 1, 1898, *ibid.*

⁴⁵*Old Edwardians Gazette*, December 1948, pp. 9-10.



Richard Williams Reynolds, 1906, aged thirty-nine. From a group photograph of staff at King Edward's School, Birmingham. *Courtesy King Edward's School, Birmingham, UK.*

While still a pupil at KES, Reynolds had manifested a sympathy with socialism. In December 1885, he supported a motion “that private property in land is unjust in principle and injurious to the welfare of the community”; and, in a debate on February 19, 1886, he declared that “he himself went neither with Conservative nor Liberal, but looked down on both parties from a platform of advanced Radicalism.”⁴⁶ His time in Oxford evidently did nothing to make him change his mind about socialism, for, on May 27, 1890, around the time he graduated, he was elected a member of the Fabian Society, which had been formed in London on January 4, 1884,

⁴⁶*KES Chronicle*, February 1886, p. 174; *ibid.*, March 1886, p. 190.

to promote the peaceful dissemination and adoption of socialist ideas in Britain.⁴⁷ It is often stated that he became secretary of the Fabian Society.⁴⁸ This is incorrect: He was never even a member of its executive committee, let alone one of its officers. But his membership brought him into contact with, among others, Beatrice and Sidney Webb, Annie Besant, and George Bernard Shaw. Writing to OB on July 1, 1892, he described lunching with OB's Belgian friends, the liberal politician and journalist Auguste Couvreur and his novelist wife, Jessie: "I had Bernard Shaw and one or two other of our Fabian economists in whom M. Couvreur is interested to meet him."⁴⁹

Very importantly for his personal future, the Fabian Society also brought him into close contact with two of its nine founder-members, Hubert Bland and the writer Edith Nesbit. The two had married in 1880. The Blands had three children together. Unknown to Edith at the time of the marriage, Hubert had fathered a son by his mother's paid companion, and, when he had two more illegitimate children with his long-term mistress, Edith accepted them as her own. Given his infidelities, he was in no position to complain when she interested herself in other men, including George Bernard Shaw. After that, she enjoyed the company and attention of a number of young men who loved and admired her, including Reynolds.⁵⁰ The loving relationship he had with this attractive, warm, and clever woman was undoubtedly of great importance to him, but to what extent it was given full physical expression is not clear. The relationship was important to her too, although she perhaps never allowed him to monopolize her. When she published her romantic novel *The Incomplete Amorist* in 1906, she dedicated it to him and to Justus Miles Forman, a handsome American novelist. With the dedication is a quotation from Balzac: "*Faire naître un désir, le nourrir, le développer, le grandir, le satisfaire, c'est un poème tout entier.*"⁵¹ Edith established herself as an outstanding writer of books for children, and 1906 saw the publication not only of the novel just mentioned but also of her best known book, *The Railway Children*.

⁴⁷Fabian Society Executive Committee Minute Book, 29 April 1890-1 September 1891, p. 20, Fabian Society/C/3, London School of Economics Archives.

⁴⁸See, e.g., *Old Edwardians Gazette*, December 1948, pp. 9-10; John Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-Earth* (London: HarperCollins, 2003), 93. Edwin Cerio, *L'Ora di Capri*, 2nd ed. (Capri: Edizioni La Conchiglia, 2000), 459, is wide of the mark when he calls Reynolds "one of the founders, with Wells and Shaw, of the Fabian Society." In fact, none of these three was a founder of the Society, and H. G. Wells did not join until February 1903.

⁴⁹Reynolds to OB, July 1, [1892], Oscar Browning Papers.

⁵⁰See, especially, Julia Briggs, *A Woman of Passion: The Life of E. Nesbit 1858-1924* (London: Hutchinson, 1987).

⁵¹E. Nesbit, *The Incomplete Amorist* (London: Archibald Constable, 1906).

A much fuller picture of Reynolds's time in London during the 1890s, as well as of other stages of his life, would emerge if a typescript memoir he compiled were accessible. Written in Chicago in the early 1940s and said to be about 175 pages long, it is in the possession of his descendants.⁵² A tantalizing indication of its likely interest and value is given by the only extract from it that seems to be publicly available. This is a delightful and appreciative vignette of the talented artist Helen Coombe, to whom he says he was introduced either by George Street or by "one of my socialist or artist friends."⁵³

Reynolds's sources of income during his years in London were limited. It is possible that he supplemented his earnings from journalism with fees from private tuition. In 1900, a teaching opportunity unexpectedly presented itself. He had kept in close touch with KES, Birmingham, ever since he left in 1886. In July 1900, the headmaster, the Reverend Alfred Richard Vardy, suffered a stroke and died. In this emergency, Reynolds was recruited as temporary assistant master for the next term.⁵⁴ He was able to live with his mother and for the time being retained his rooms in London.

The following summer, the first assistant master at KES, the Reverend J. Hunter Smith, retired after many years of service, and, on June 26, 1901, Reynolds was appointed to replace him as the form-master of Class Four (Classical) at a starting salary of £200 a year. In his retirement speech, Hunter Smith said: "There is no one in the country whom I should prefer to Mr Reynolds as my successor. He is a favourite old pupil, he has ever been as a son to me, and he brings to the work brilliant scholarship, versatile talents, and a freshness to which I could never, at any time, have laid claim."⁵⁵

As it turned out, Reynolds was not particularly well suited to step into his predecessor's shoes. Most of the boys in Class Four were too young and immature to appreciate his learning and somewhat idiosyncratic teaching methods, and he was a poor disciplinarian. This is made clear in his obituary in the *Old Edwardians Gazette*.⁵⁶ In a letter of January

⁵²"A letter from Richard R[eynolds] yesterday pleases me. I am interested that he is writing his memoirs for Mynie and Claire"; Achsah Barlow Brewster to Harwood Brewster Picard, May 25, 1941, Willa Cather Collection, Drew University Library Special Collections, Madison, NJ.

⁵³Papers of Roger Eliot Fry, King's College, Cambridge, Archive Centre, catalog no. REF/13/2. The memoir is entitled "Some Notes on Family History," and the page carrying the account of Helen Coombe is numbered 93. Part of it is quoted by me in "Virginia Woolf and 'the Hermaphrodite': A Feminist Fan of *Orlando* and Critic of *Roger Fry*," *English Studies* 97 (2016): 292-293.

⁵⁴*Governors' Order Book*, October 31, 1900, KES Archives.

⁵⁵*KES Chronicle*, October 1901, p. 186.

⁵⁶*Old Edwardians Gazette*, December 1948, pp. 9-10. The writer observes: "it would be foolish to pretend that he wore Hunter Smith's mantle worthily."

9, 1964, his most famous pupil, J. R. R. Tolkien, told a contemporary at KES, the Reverend Denis Tyndall, that he had found Reynolds's teaching at that stage "boring," although he adds that he was "immensely interesting as a person."⁵⁷ As well as being in charge of Class Four, Reynolds contributed to the teaching of classics to Classes Two and Three and taught history to Class One. Also, he took Oxbridge scholarship candidates for "Special History" and "English Essay." It was with these mature, able, and well-motivated pupils that he was most successful. With his excellent knowledge of ancient and modern languages and of classical, English, and continental literature, he was well placed to bring out the best of them, and he took immense trouble with individuals as well as with groups. He also made important contributions to KES outside the classroom, presiding over the Debating and Literary Societies and not infrequently speaking in debates and reading papers. As when he was a pupil, he gave much time to the school library.⁵⁸

Tolkien entered KES in September 1900, aged eight, so that his arrival coincided with that of Reynolds as temporary assistant master. Early in 1902, Tolkien's mother, Mabel, who had converted to Roman Catholicism, transferred him to a Catholic school, but its academic standard was poor, and she soon removed him and taught him herself. Elected a Foundation Scholar at KES, he resumed his studies there in January 1903.⁵⁹ He entered Reynolds's Class Four in January 1906, when he was just fourteen, and remained in it until July. Although he found his teacher boring at this stage, he undoubtedly learned much from him later, both in and out of class. Reynolds did his best to interest boys in English poets from Milton to Kipling and Walter de la Mare. At a meeting of the Debating Society, he once proposed the daring motion "That Kipling is the greatest English poet since Shakespeare."⁶⁰ His interest in early English and Scottish ballads is likely to have appealed to Tolkien; likewise his knowledge of German language and literature as well as of English and classics.⁶¹ That he continued to interest himself in German while on the staff of KES is indicated by his editing, for German students of English, Frances

⁵⁷Humphrey Carpenter, with the assistance of Christopher Tolkien, *Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1981), 342-343.

⁵⁸See the assessments not only in his obituary but also his retirement notice in *KES Chronicle*, November-December 1922, pp. 79-80.

⁵⁹Not in autumn 1903, as stated by Humphrey Carpenter, *J. R. R. Tolkien: A Biography* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1977), 27.

⁶⁰*KES Chronicle*, March 1905, p. 6.

⁶¹Reynolds read a paper on ballads to the Literary Society on February 28, 1902; *KES Chronicle*, March 1902, pp. 24-25.

Webster's *The Island Realm, or Günter's Wanderyear, Being Scenes from English Life*.⁶²

During Tolkien's last year at school (1910-1911), he and a small number of other senior boys formed an esoteric society for the discussion of literature, mythology, and other cultural topics. It met for tea either in the school library or in the first-floor café of the old-established Barrow's Stores on Birmingham's Corporation Street, very close to KES, which at that time was located in the city center, in New Street. It came to be known by the acronym TCBS, standing for Tea Club, Barrovian Society. The core members were Tolkien, Christopher Luke Wiseman, Robert Quilter Gilson, and Geoffrey Bache Smith. Gilson's father was the headmaster, Robert Cary Gilson. The four kept in touch with one another until 1916, when Gilson and Smith were killed in action. Reynolds was in no way involved in the TCBS's formation or agenda, but, given that he was closely involved with the school library, the Debating Society, and the Literary Society, he must have been a potent influence. Over fifty years later, Tolkien would recall that when his time at KES had ended, Reynolds gave him a lift to Oxford in his new automobile, which was affectionately known as the "Green Lady."⁶³ Tolkien kept in touch with Reynolds and sometimes sought his advice on pieces he had written not only soon after he left KES, but at least as late as 1926. Indeed, Tolkien states that he "kept up with him and the Beak until they died."⁶⁴ Among the Tolkien family papers deposited in (but not owned by) the Bodleian Library, Oxford, are six uncataloged letters written by Reynolds to Tolkien between 1915 and 1917. In them, he gave his former pupil some advice about the latter's literary compositions.⁶⁵

Reynolds was with his mother when she died, aged seventy-eight, on August 18, 1907, at 4 Holly Road, Handsworth, the home she shared with him and probably also Bessie. Her death certificate lists the causes as "Mammary Carcinoma 2 years" and "Pulmonary Congestion." The only parent he had known, she had brought him up admirably in difficult circumstances.

Three years later, Reynolds married. His long and close friendship with Edith Nesbit had naturally brought him into close contact with her

⁶²Frances Webster, *The Island Realm, or Günter's Wanderyear, Being Scenes from English Life* (Bielefeld: Velhagen & Klasing, 1906). The same publisher also issued separately a twenty-six-page appendix containing Reynolds's "Annotations." This probably appeared a year or two later, but no date is given.

⁶³Carpenter, *Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, 343.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 343. The "Beak" is headmaster Robert Cary Gilson.

⁶⁵Details can be found in Garth, *Tolkien and the Great War*, 76, 93, 279-280. Garth was granted access to the Tolkien papers. Unfortunately, I was refused access to Reynolds's letters and so cannot judge the "chemistry," or lack of it, between the two men.

relatives, and for many years he had known and liked her favorite niece, (Mary) Dorothea Deakin. Born in Manchester on December 19, 1876, she was the daughter of Edith's half-sister, Sarah ("Saretta") Deakin, and her husband, John Deakin, a cashier at the time of Dorothea's birth and later a cotton merchant. Dorothea was a slim, attractive, vivacious, sweet-natured, and clever woman, who, with advice and encouragement from Edith, enjoyed some popularity as a writer on both sides of the Atlantic in the first decade of the twentieth century. Between 1903 and 1910, she had seven light and gently humorous romantic novels published, including *Melinda*, *Georgie*, and *The Goddess Girl*. She also wrote short stories for British and American magazines, among them *Strand Magazine*, *Pall Mall Magazine*, *The Queen*, and *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*. Her writing brought her some much-needed income. Her mother had died in 1899, leaving her responsible for her invalid and impecunious father and to some extent her three younger brothers. Reynolds became increasingly interested in her, somewhat to the displeasure of Edith, who did not want to lose his close attention. She did her best to obstruct the love affair.⁶⁶ But on December 21, 1910, two days after Dorothea's thirty-fourth birthday, she and Richard, who was nearly ten years older, were married in St. Mary's (Anglican) Church, Hendon, in London. His details, entered in the marriage register⁶⁷ and reproduced in the marriage certificate, merit some comment. This is the only place where he gave his father a middle name, and he got it wrong—"Daniel Henry Reynolds." He gave his "father's rank or profession" as "Brigadier General" but without indicating that his service was not in the British army.

After their marriage, Richard and Dorothea lived at 10 Pakenham Road in the affluent Birmingham suburb of Edgbaston. Their detached house was (and is) attractive, with an elegant classical portico in front and a long garden behind. They could well afford to live in comfort because Reynolds, as well as benefiting in a modest way after Annie died intestate, had received a substantial legacy under the will of his uncle Richard Williams, who died on June 28, 1909, aged ninety-two, leaving an estate with a net value of over £30,000, equivalent to about £3,275,000 in 2016.⁶⁸ Although Reynolds did not receive all of this, he was the residuary legatee. The census of April 2, 1911, shows four other occupants of the house—Dorothea's bedridden father, a nurse for him, a cook, and a housemaid. His half-sister Bessie was not there. She was to spend her last years in

⁶⁶Briggs, *Woman of Passion*, 228-229.

⁶⁷Register of St. Mary's Church, Hendon, London Metropolitan Archives, on microfilm at X094/184.

⁶⁸If Annie's estate was divided equally between Reynolds and Bessie, he will have received about £1800.

Wales in a nursing home near Harlech. She died there on August 1, 1925, aged seventy-one. Reynolds was the sole beneficiary of her estate, whose net value was just over £3500.

Dorothea did no writing after her marriage. She no longer needed the money, and, at the beginning, she would have been much occupied organizing the house and giving attention to her father. Also, she soon became pregnant. She was to have three children in quick succession, and she was not only very busy with them, but also, by the time the third child arrived, battling against a serious illness. The first child, Diana, born on February 11, 1912, was followed by Hermione ("Mynie") on November 14, 1913, and Pamela on May 24, 1915. Friends used to say that the third daughter should have been called Victoria, partly because she was born on Queen Victoria's birthday, partly because as a young child she looked remarkably like the monarch.⁶⁹ Encouraged by their parents, the girls became voracious readers at an early age. Pamela was especially remarkable for her very early development in speech, thought, reading, and writing. Since the three were close in age, they were good at entertaining one another. Their early childhood was undoubtedly a very happy one, but for Dorothea and Richard life was less idyllic. Dorothea's health was a cause of great anxiety. While expecting Pamela, she was diagnosed with pulmonary tuberculosis, and, a few months after Pamela was born, her condition deteriorated markedly, and she became an invalid. It was mainly for her sake that in 1919 the family left Edgbaston to escape the smoke and smog of a big industrial city.

Their new home, "Winterholme," sat on four acres in the Worcestershire countryside at Barnt Green, a village about ten miles southwest of Birmingham. Occupying an elevated position on the southern slopes of the Lickey Hills, the spacious redbrick house offered fine views. The children loved it, and the purer air suited Dorothea, whose health significantly improved. The children attended a local school, and Reynolds commuted to Birmingham. But, in autumn 1920, he was struck down by a serious illness, the nature of which he did not divulge. He was off work from October 1920 until September 1921. Although he then resumed teaching, his health continued to be unsatisfactory, and, having been certified as "mentally and physically, wholly and permanently unfit for work," he resigned with effect from September 1922.⁷⁰

⁶⁹An abundant source of information about Pamela and her sisters in their childhood is Richard Reynolds's memoir "Pamela" (unpublished and undated typescript, private collection). I have made much use of it in my account of the Reynolds family in the years 1915-1929.

⁷⁰Reynolds, "Pamela," 4.

For the sake of his and Dorothea's health, the couple took doctors' advice to live abroad. After considering various destinations, they decided upon Capri. Reynolds had visited it thirty years earlier, and it was now the home of his friend the novelist and doctor Francis Brett Young and his wife. Young, too, had health problems and strongly recommended the island. The family arrived in Capri on September 30, 1922, and soon found a house they wanted—a small villa called Casa Monticello, standing by itself outside the village of Anacapri at an altitude of eight hundred feet and looking south across a wooded valley to the sea.⁷¹ For the girls, Capri was a case of love at first sight—an exotic and beautiful playground affording ample opportunities for walking, climbing, swimming, and canoeing. As for education, instead of going to school for long hours, they received tuition from their father each morning from nine until half past twelve. After that, they were free to do what they wanted. Reynolds taught them English, French, Italian, mathematics, and history. He soon arranged for them to receive lessons in music, dancing, and foreign languages. The extra tuition in foreign languages was mainly for Diana, who had an exceptional talent for them as well as for music. Pamela's chief talents lay in poetry, drawing, and philosophy. When she was "at a very tender age," apparently about five, Reynolds tried her with Berkeleian idealism. She understood it at once and quickly put her knowledge to practical use. When her nurse made what she regarded as an unreasonable demand, she gave in under protest, adding, as a Parthian shot, "After all, you're only an idea in my mind." When she had attained the advanced age of thirteen and was visiting Rome, she had a lengthy discussion over lunch with the eminent idealist philosopher Benedetto Croce. She was not in the least overawed, and, when asked on her return to Capri what she thought of him, commented: "His philosophy is sound, but. . . ." She had her reservations!⁷² She remained a committed Berkeleian. "To the end of her life she confessed to being unable to believe in the reality of the external world and protests against such solipsism left her unconvinced."⁷³

Among other residents of Anacapri when the Reynoldses arrived were the Swedish doctor Axel Munthe, who had built a villa for himself on the ruins of a palace of Tiberius—the Villa San Michele, celebrated in his most famous book, *The Story of San Michele* (1929). They quickly became friendly with him, and he allowed them to play badminton on his grassy tennis court. His love of animals no doubt endeared him to

⁷¹There is a photograph of the house in Riccardo Esposito, ed., *Versocapri: Antologia poetica del novecento* (Capri: Edizioni La Conchiglia, 2004), 162.

⁷²Cerio, *L'Ora di Capri*, 459-460.

⁷³Reynolds, "Pamela," 8.

the Reynolds girls, who kept a variety of pets. But more important than Munthe were the Brewster family. Achsah Leona Barlow Brewster and Earl Henry Brewster were American painters and writers in their mid-forties. They had a daughter, Harwood Barlow Brewster, six months younger than Diana. As soon as Diana, Mynie, and Pamela were introduced to Harwood, they got on like a house on fire, and, whenever all four were on the island, Reynolds included Harwood in his classes.⁷⁴ To say that the Brewsters were an unusual couple would be an understatement. Highly spiritual, their union became a celibate one during Achsah's pregnancy and remained so until her death in 1945. She always dressed in white, and he was deeply interested in European philosophy, including Platonism, and especially in Eastern philosophy and religion, becoming a Buddhist, then a Vedanta Hindu. In 1935, the couple left Europe to live in India and never returned.⁷⁵ They introduced Reynolds and his daughters to their close friend D. H. Lawrence in 1926.

With the move to Capri, Reynolds's health improved, but Dorothea's declined, and, on November 30, 1923, the family sailed from Naples for Alexandria in the hope that the dry winter climate of Egypt would benefit her. They rented a bungalow in a derelict date plantation on the edge of the desert southwest of Cairo. For the children, it was a great adventure: They rode donkeys to the Pyramids and Sphinx, rode camels as well, saw wolves, heard jackals at night, built towns in the sand, and attended an Arab wedding at which two guests were accidentally shot, one fatally. But the deterioration in Dorothea's health continued, and on March 21, 1924, the Reynoldses sailed from Alexandria heading for Switzerland. They reached Lugano and took rooms in the lakeside Hotel Victoria. At first, Dorothea seemed slightly better, but, on April 9, she was admitted to the Clinica Luganese with pneumonia. She died there six days later. The girls' ages ranged from nine to twelve. They were old enough to have been indelibly influenced by their mother's fine qualities of mind and character. One of these qualities, cheerfulness and fortitude in the face of adversity and pain, was now to be exhibited in abundance by the whole family as they faced life without her.

Reynolds's first move was to employ a woman to help with the children. Within days of Dorothea's death, he chose a cultivated, polyglot

⁷⁴Lively and charming descriptions of the numerous activities the four enjoyed together are contained not only in Reynolds, "Pamela," but also in Achsah Barlow Brewster, "The Child: Harwood Barlow Brewster" (unpublished memoir, 1942), 277-310, Willa Cather Collection, Drew University Special Collections. When Harwood was fourteen, she described her contacts with the Reynoldses in "Fourteen Years of My Adventures" (unpublished typescript, 1926), private collection, 4-8, 44-45.

⁷⁵On the Brewsters, see, especially, Lucy Marks and David Porter, *Seeking Life Whole: Willa Cather and the Brewsters* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2009).



Photograph by R. W. Reynolds of his daughters in 1926; from left, Mynie, Pamela, Diana. *Private collection.*

Dane, Eli Laub, who accompanied them back from Lugano to Capri and stayed with them for a year. She proved to be pleasant and stimulating company but was of little practical assistance. She was replaced by a British woman, Hilda Balfour (“Bal”), who was just the opposite—not at all intellectual, but commonsensical, practical, versatile, and energetic. She was also kind and had a keen sense of humor. She was to remain with the Reynoldses for five years, until 1930, by which time the girls were studying away from Capri.

Casa Monticello must have seemed empty when the family returned without Dorothea, but, in addition to the Brewsters, there were other friends to provide company and distraction and new acquaintances, too, including the writer Compton Mackenzie and his wife, Faith, although they were soon to leave Capri.

Soon after the family returned from a visit to England, the first issue of *Genius Burning* appeared, on Monday, October 20, 1924. “[A] domestic magazine written and produced entirely by the girls,” its title was inspired by Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women*, in which one of the four March sisters, Jo, accustomed to shutting herself up in her room whenever she wanted to write, was left alone by the rest of the family at such times, except that they occasionally put their heads round the door to ask, “Does genius burn, Jo?”⁷⁶ With several breaks, the longest lasting from February

⁷⁶Reynolds, “Pamela,” 17.

1926 until January 1928, it appeared on Mondays for five years, until June 24, 1929, usually weekly, but fortnightly from October 1928. Each issue, except the last, ran to six pages—five carrying articles, stories, and poems and the sixth an illustration in color. The main contributors were Diana, the editor, and Pamela, who took over as editor in October 1928 when Diana left home. Harwood was often involved, Mynie less often and then usually as an illustrator. Friends occasionally made guest appearances. The standard of composition was high, and the magazine gives a vivid and charming picture of the girls' interests, thoughts, and activities. Harwood's set of issues, in a blue satin case embroidered by Eli Laub, is in the Centro Caprense Ignazio Cerio, Capri.

Most of the poetry in *Genius Burning* was the work of Pamela, whose talent in this area was outstanding. A year after the foundation of the magazine, four of her poems and one piece of prose were printed in the *New Statesman*, the prestigious and influential British weekly review of politics and literature. Pamela was only ten, and four of the pieces had been written when she was younger than that—one when she was seven.⁷⁷ Six poems she presented to Edwin Cerio in 1934 were published seventy years later with an Italian translation.⁷⁸

For Reynolds, the education and care of his daughters were always his chief concern and occupation. This, together with his modesty and diffidence, helps to explain why he did little writing. But his expertise in many areas, including English and European literature, his intellectual abilities, his independence and fairness of mind, and his generosity in sharing his knowledge were soon recognized and exploited by others. Casa Monticello gained a reputation for being a cultural workshop, which some of his friends jokingly called "little Oxford" ("la piccola Oxford").⁷⁹ As well as advising authors on books they were writing or had written, he translated one of the chapters of Edwin Cerio's best-selling book *L'Aria di Capri* for the English edition published in 1929.⁸⁰ Later, he produced an English translation of an unusual German work—edited selections from the diary of Cordelia Gundolf (1917-2008), who had accompanied her mother to Italy, and especially to Capri, several times in the 1920s and

⁷⁷Pamela Reynolds, "Very Early Poems," *New Statesman*, October 17, 1925, p. 14.

⁷⁸Renato Esposito, ed., "Pamela Reynolds: I sogni e gli incubi di una giovane poetessa," in *Almanaco Caprese*, vol. 12 (Capri: Edizioni La Conchiglia, 2004), 95-106. The typescript originals of the six poems and a letter to Cerio are in the Centro Caprense Ignazio Cerio, Capri.

⁷⁹Edwin Cerio, "Parole di saluto a Richard W. Reynolds nel Composanto Acattolico di Capri il 27 Dicembre 1947," unpublished typescript, Centro Caprense Ignazio Cerio, Capri.

⁸⁰Edwin Cerio, *That Capri Air*, with a foreword by Francis Brett Young (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1929). The chapter translated by Reynolds is "The Temple of Cybele" (139-154).

early 1930s. Essentially, the book contains the sensitive observations and impressions of a young girl.⁸¹

In October 1928, Diana went to Heidelberg to learn German. In 1929-1930, she passed Oxford University's entrance examinations and, in 1931, entered Lady Margaret Hall to read classics.⁸² Mynie and Pamela also went to Heidelberg and England to further their education. After a spell at boarding school, Mynie began but did not complete a nursing course in London. Pamela studied art, first at the Slade School of Fine Art at University College, London, then at l'École des Beaux Arts, Fontainebleau.⁸³

Diana enjoyed her time in Oxford and made quite an impression.⁸⁴ But she left in March 1933 to prepare for marriage to a Frenchman, Georges Levy Picard, an English teacher and former Rhodes Scholar. They married in Paris on February 8, 1934, three days before her twenty-second birthday.⁸⁵ A year later, on February 5, 1935, she gave birth to a daughter, Claire Dorothea Picard—"Dorothea" after the baby's maternal grandmother.⁸⁶ At first all seemed well, but, on March 29, Diana died, apparently from a postpartum infection.

On June 1, 1935, exactly two months after the *Times* printed a notice of Diana's death, its "Deaths" column carried another grim announcement: "REYNOLDS.—On May 27, 1935, at Anacapri, instantaneously, from an accident, PAMELA, youngest daughter of R.W. REYNOLDS, of Monticello, Anacapri, aged 20." In Italy in recent years, there has been ill-informed, sensationalist speculation that her death was not an accident, but suicide or even murder.⁸⁷ But Pamela was not alone when she died.⁸⁸ Harwood Brewster recalled: "On May 27, Pam and Mynie were taking a walk near Damicuta [Damecuta], which they had taken countless times. Pam slipped, falling into the sea after hitting her head."⁸⁹ Mynie herself wrote on August 20, 1997, to Georges Picard:

⁸¹Cordelia Gundolf, *Myrtles and Mice: Leaves from the Italian Diary of Cordelia Gundolf*, trans. R. W. Reynolds (New York: Dutton, 1935).

⁸²Information from Lady Margaret Hall (LMH) archives.

⁸³Information from family source.

⁸⁴Obituary, by classics tutor A. M. D[ale], *The Brown Book*, December 1935, p. 35, LMH Archives.

⁸⁵*Times* (London), February 12, 1934, p. 1.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, February 15, 1935, p. 1.

⁸⁷This is the line taken by Rita Monaldi and Francesco Sorti in their "historical" novel *Malaparte: Morte come me* [*Malaparte: Death Like Me*] (Milano: Baldini & Castoldi, 2016).

⁸⁸Marks and Porter, *Seeking Life Whole*, 69.

⁸⁹Harwood Brewster Picard, "To Frances and Claire: Some Memories of Your Grandparents Earl Henry Brewster and Achsah Barlow Brewster" (unpublished typescript, July 1977), 56-57, Cather Collection, Drew University.

I feel very strange when I think of that year [1935]. It's still very much a series of clear pictures. Diana lying dead as I last saw her, Pam slipping and sliding down the cliff at Orico, and floating on the surface in her bright dress, when I finally got to the water and swam to her, and pulled her out. I've sometimes wondered if I could have saved her by first aid. But the doctor who examined her said she had hit her head on the way down and that had killed her.⁹⁰

If Pamela had wanted to kill herself, she would hardly have made the attempt while out for a walk with her sister, and Capri has many cliffs higher and more precipitous than those of Orrico (as it is now usually spelled) from which she could have made a clean jump. Still, Orrico is a rugged spot, and it is easy to believe that one could have an accident there if one tripped and/or suffered a momentary lapse of concentration. One may add that the idea that Pamela would be so selfish as to inflict a second bereavement on her father and surviving sister contradicts everything that is known about her character.

Pamela, who died just three days after her twentieth birthday, was buried in Capri's historic Non-Catholic Cemetery (Cimitero Acattolico). Twelve years later, her father was buried next to her. According to Dieter Richter in his book on the cemetery, Pamela's gravestone carries the famous Latin dictum "*Quem di diligunt/adulescens moritur, dum valet sentit sapit,*" meaning: "Whom the gods love dies young, while the person's physical and mental faculties are intact."⁹¹ But the inscription simply reads: "IN/LOVING MEMORY/OF/PAMELA REYNOLDS/BORN MAY 24, 1915/DIED MAY 27, 1935." At her father's funeral, Edwin Cerio quoted the Latin saying in his remarks about Pamela, and it is highly likely that Reynolds himself thought of it in connection with both Pamela's and Diana's deaths.⁹² But he was a man whose behavior and reactions were understated and undramatic, and the simple inscriptions on both Pamela's and his graves are in character for him.⁹³

In summer 1935, Harwood Brewster went to stay at Casa Monticello. When she arrived, Georges was there with baby Claire. Harwood and he fell in love. They married in Paris on May 7, 1936, and the following year moved to the United States. Harwood brought up Claire as her own child.

⁹⁰Private collection.

⁹¹Dieter Richter, *Il giardino della memoria: Il Cimitero Acattolico di Capri: Storia di un luogo* (Capri: Edizioni La Conchiglia, 2015), 145. The quotation is of Plautus, *Bacchides*, 816-817. The thought is first found in Menander. I have paraphrased the last four words of the Latin.

⁹²"Parole di saluto."

⁹³Reynolds's gravestone simply gives his full name and the dates of his birth and death.

On October 1, 1938, Harwood gave birth to a daughter, named Frances Diana—Diana after Claire’s mother.⁹⁴ After several years of teaching, Georges served abroad with the U.S. Army. In 1951, he and Harwood divorced. She died in Washington in 1990.⁹⁵

Six months after Pamela’s death, Reynolds, after eleven years as a widower, remarried. He was now sixty-eight. His second wife was Edith Harriet Andrews, an attractive sixty-nine-year-old American woman, who had been a resident of Capri for just over forty years. She and her much older husband, William Page Andrews, had moved there from Massachusetts in 1894. He was not exactly enthralling company for anyone not interested in Goethe’s *Faust*, which was his main passion and topic of conversation. His only other significant interest was his health. He was a semi-invalid and hypochondriac. Edith was a much more congenial person.⁹⁶ Edith and William are represented by Elsie Neave and Joseph Rutger Neave in Compton Mackenzie’s novel *Vestal Fire*, set on the island of Sirene with a village called Antisirene. Joseph is always translating Dante and brings Dante into every conversation. Elsie is described as “a little blonde with bright weary eyes who was still pretty enough to make her elderly husband smack his lips at the idea of her being admired by other men,” and as having “a genuine simplicity which was rather charming, and completely disarming.”⁹⁷

William Page Andrews died in 1916. It was inevitable that Edith would meet the Reynolds family, but it is not clear when she and Richard got to know one another well.⁹⁸ They married in London on November 27, 1935.⁹⁹ Any hopes that the marriage would bring lasting comfort, companionship, and mutual loving support as the couple moved into and through old age were soon to be shattered. Just ninety-nine days later, on March 5, 1936, Edith died.¹⁰⁰ She is buried in the Non-Catholic Cemetery in a tomb next to that of her first husband.

Reynolds did not marry again. He continued to live at Casa Monticello and in 1938 had the satisfaction of seeing Mynie get married to (Otto Jolle) Matthijs (“Thijs”) Jolles, the brother of a Dutch-German

⁹⁴Frances Diana Picard Holt is much interested not only in the Brewster family but also in the Reynoldses. She is generous with information and encouragement, and the present writer owes her a heavy debt. Claire died on June 20, 2009.

⁹⁵Information from Frances Diana Picard Holt.

⁹⁶James Money, *Capri: Island of Pleasure* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1986), 53-54.

⁹⁷Compton Mackenzie, *Vestal Fire* (London: Cassell, 1927), 5, 128.

⁹⁸On November 3, 1931, both were elected members of a new committee appointed to manage the Non-Catholic Cemetery, but they probably met much earlier; Richter, *Il giardino della memoria*, 56.

⁹⁹*Times*, November 29, 1935, p. 1.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, March 11, 1936, p. 1.

friend, in Aberystwyth, Wales, where he was teaching German. She was twenty-four, he twenty-seven. They went to live in Chicago, where he continued to teach German. Reynolds returned to Capri but came to visit them the following spring. It is not known how long he stayed, nor is it clear if he returned to Capri. The next information is that he re-entered the U.S. by road at Detroit from Windsor, Ontario, on May 3, 1940, with permission to be a permanent resident. His immigration card indicates that he had come from England.¹⁰¹

It is well that he left Italy before June 10, 1940, when Benito Mussolini declared war on the United Kingdom and France. Otherwise, he would have faced internment. He stayed with Mynie and Thijs until after the end of the war. No doubt he was able to give them financial assistance, and he kept himself busy. He read and played the piano, busied himself with his family memoir, and gave Thijs much help with the latter's translation of Karl von Clausewitz's treatise *On War*.¹⁰² It would be surprising if he did not think often of his father in connection with Clausewitz, not least in reference to a famous passage in the first chapter: "We see, therefore, that war is not merely a political act but a real political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, a carrying out of the same by other means."¹⁰³ As Kim Allen Scott has pointed out, "An interesting example of the Clausewitz maxim can be found in the career of Daniel Harris Reynolds, who fought a war that required him to display as much skill in the political arena as in the military."¹⁰⁴

Arnold Jolles remembers Reynolds, his grandfather, talking about the American Civil War. Although he was careful to explain the importance of Abraham Lincoln, "his sympathies seemed to lie somewhat with the South."¹⁰⁵ Perhaps his viewpoint was influenced by his knowledge of the prominent part his father had played on that side in the conflict and of his mother's years in Arkansas before, during, and after the war.

Reynolds remained in the U.S. until at least August 1945. Harwood's daughter, Frances, who saw him at that time, writes: "My memory is of a very nice old man who was hard of hearing. He had a cumbersome hearing aid, wore a straw hat and maybe a seersucker suit. I think he had trouble with his teeth."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹Card Manifests (Alphabetical) of Individuals Entering through the Port of Detroit, Michigan, 1906-1954, ancestry.com (accessed September 29, 2016).

¹⁰²Karl von Clausewitz, *On War* (New York: Modern Library, 1943).

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁰⁴Kim Allen Scott, review of *Worthy of the Cause for Which They Fight: The Civil War Diary of Brigadier General Daniel Harris Reynolds, 1861-1865*, edited by Robert Patrick Bender, *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 71 (Winter 2012): 445.

¹⁰⁵Email to the author, August 20, 2016.

¹⁰⁶Email to the author, September 17, 2016.

Reynolds returned to Capri and Casa Monticello in 1946 or 1947. The island had suffered occupations and deprivations during the war, and provisions were scarce for some time after it. In the last years of the war, Monticello was occupied by American military personnel, for whom Capri had been designated a rest-camp. Before Reynolds left for the U.S., his valuables (including a full set of gold teeth!) were packed away in boxes, and these were taken away and stored by Raffaella Celentano (1901-1958), who, since the mid-1920s, had been a faithful employee of the family, cooking, washing, and helping to look after the girls. Such was her devotion to the family that, in memory of Pamela, she gave her own daughter the same name. When Reynolds returned to Capri, she returned all the valuables intact.¹⁰⁷

In summer 1947, the Jolles family visited Capri. Reynolds had turned eighty in February, and his health was failing. He was composed, quiet, and kind. He managed short walks and wrote letters. Sometimes he fainted at dinner. He died peacefully at home on December 22. The cause of his death is not certain but was probably heart failure.

The funeral took place in the Non-Catholic Cemetery on December 27. Mynie and Thijs were present with their children to see Reynolds interred next to Pamela and to hear Edwin Cerio deliver in Italian a eulogy that celebrated daughter as well as father.¹⁰⁸ Near the end of his address, Cerio recalled the words of a poem she sent him in 1934, entitled “Shadows”:

Do not put out your hand to touch the shadows.
 They are so beautiful, the shadows, crimson, vermillion, violet,
 azure and green.
 But it is terrible, terrible, to find out that they are intangible and
 without life.

Cerio continued (I translate the Italian):

Terrible, but not for the shadows—for us, when we want to stretch
 out our hands, to stir our bodily senses to touch the shadows, and
 they escape us.

And that is why we do not want to approach Pamela and recall
 her father with bodily senses. We want to come close to them in

¹⁰⁷Information from the Reynolds family and Celentano’s daughter, Pamela Viva.

¹⁰⁸“Parole di saluto.” The Reynolds graves can be seen in the center of the color photograph in Richter, *Il giardino della memoria*, 26, top left.

our thoughts and keep them together, as together they lie, in our memories. To his surviving daughter, Hermione, and her husband we want to give the assurance that Richard Reynolds, who became a “fellow countryman”¹⁰⁹ of Capri, blended and united with our land, will be guarded in our hearts, in the memories of present and absent friends.

If some satisfaction can be found in Reynolds’s peaceful end, one cannot escape the conclusion that he suffered more than his fair share of disappointments and misfortunes. A lesser man might have been crushed by them, but he soldiered on. His father had been a man of physical courage, who had philosophically accepted the loss of a leg in battle. Reynolds’s courage and determination were, perhaps, partly inherited from his father but at least as much from his mother, who, after suffering the deaths of her husband and younger daughter in Arkansas and surviving the deprivations and dangers of the American Civil War, reacted to the disappointment of losing her lover by making a new life for herself, their son, and her elder daughter in England.

¹⁰⁹Italian “*paesano*.” The opposite of a *forestiero*, “outsider.”